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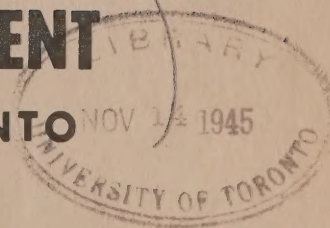
PACKAGING FARM PRODUCE

TRADE & INDUSTRY BRANCH
INDUSTRIAL SERIES NO. 3



ONTARIO

THE DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING and DEVELOPMENT
QUEEN'S PARK — TORONTO



WRAPPING AND PACKAGING

FARM PRODUCE

The methods of marketing that applied when the greater percentage of our population lived on small farms, or in small centers in farming communities, become obsolete as our population drifts from the primary industries into manufacturing, and becomes concentrated in large urban centers, more or less remote from the source of farm produce.

The Dairy Industry has changed its methods of marketing to meet changing conditions. Very little change has been noticeable in methods of marketing fresh fruits and vegetables, particularly green and leaf varieties.

Lloyd Stouffer in "Modern Packaging" says:

"Americans throw away one fourth of all the food their farms produce -- simply because it doesn't get to the table in palatable condition. This "normal wastage" is most apparent in fresh fruits and vegetables. Shipped long distances, handled and rehandled, picked over by customers, an estimated 43 percent of all green and leafy produce turns into rubbish before it can reach the dinner table.

In Columbus, Ohio, an experiment conducted jointly by the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company and Ohio State University is demonstrating that, when perishable produce is sealed in packages of moisture-proof cellophane and kept refrigerated, the greater part of the spoilage is eliminated. The packaging prevents the dissipation of vitamin content, the refrigeration arrests the internal combustion that destroys food value, and since the produce is precleaned and pretrimmed it is ready for the pot.

Comparison tests show that green beans are still in perfect condition after five days in the package; unpackaged, they are completely unsalable. Packaged spinach, broccoli and radishes are 90 percent salable after five days, and similar results were found for 30 other vegetables and fruits.

Progressive California growers are packaging their produce, precooling it, and flying it to eastern cities overnight. Airborne asparagus is sold at a premium price in Cleveland 24 hours after it is picked in Salinas, Calif. One grower ships 17,000 pounds of packaged produce weekly by air."

It may be assumed that this is typical of both U.S.A. and Canada.

Wrapping and packaging is a very small item of the cost per unit. Yet it brings the producer a premium price for his product. This premium price increases the margin of profit very appreciably, and shows a very considerable return in the investment necessary for wrapping and packaging.

The consumer pays more for his produce per unit, but considerably less per pound for edible produce reaching his table.

Strange as it may seem, it is apparently true that:

The consumer gets more for his money.

The primary producer makes a greater profit on his produce.

More jobs are created in manufacturing the packaging material, the machinery used to manufacture it, the production of the raw material from which it is produced, and the extra labor and equipment necessary to package the produce itself.

The elimination of waste pays us extra profits, pays wages for the extra jobs, and at the same time improves our standard of living.

